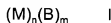


CLEAN VERSION OF AMENDMENTS

Cancel claims 7-10 and 13.

Amend claims 1-6, 11, 12, 14 and 15 as follows:

1. (amended) The method of increasing the bioavailability of mineral salts which comprises combining said salts and α -lipoic acid or an α -dihydrolipoic acid.
2. (amended) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one mineral salt is combined with a-lipoic acid or a-dihydrolipoic acid.
3. (amended) The method of claim 2, wherein the mineral salts have the formula I,



where

M is a monovalent to trivalent physiologically acceptable metal cation,

B is a monovalent to trivalent physiologically acceptable anion,

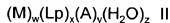
n is 1, 2 or 3 and

m is 1, 2 or 3,

where the subscripts n and m correspond to the valency and charge equalization of the mineral salt of the formula I.

4. (twice amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the combination is metal α -lipoates, metal α -dihydrolipoates or metal- α -lipoic acid complexes.

5. (amended) The method of claim 4, wherein the combination is metal α -lipoates, metal α -dihydrolipoates or metal- α -lipoic acid complexes of the formula II,



where

- B³*
cont.
- M is a monovalent to trivalent physiologically acceptable metal cation or a mixture of monovalent to trivalent physiologically acceptable metal cations,
- Lp is racemic α -lipoic acid or α -dihydrolipoic acid, (R)- or (S)- α -lipoic acid or (R)- or (S)- α -dihydrolipoic acid, racemic α -lipoate or dihydro- α -lipoate or (R)- or (S)- α -lipoate or (R)- or (S)-dihydro- α -lipoate,
- A is a physiologically acceptable monovalent or divalent anion,
- w is 1 or 2
- x is 1, 2, 3 or 4,
- y is 0, 1, 2 or 3 and
- z is 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6,

where the subscripts w, x and y correspond to the valency and charge equalization of the compound of the formula II.

B⁴

6. (twice amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the α -lipoic acid is R- α -lipoic acid or the α -lipoate is (R)- α -lipoate.

B³

11. (amended) A method of increasing the bioavailability of mineral salts in feedstuff or food supplements which comprises adding to said feedstuff or food supplements an effective amount of the metal α -lipoates, metal α -dihydrolipoates or metal- α -lipoic acid complexes defined in claim 5.

12. (amended) A method of improving cosmetic formulations which comprises adding to

B⁵
cont.
said formulations an effective amount of the metal α -lipoates, metal α -dihydrolipoates or metal- α -lipoic acid complexes defined in claim 5.

14. (amended) A method of improving drugs that are used to treat disorders in which

B⁶
lipoic acid has a therapeutic or prophylactic effect and in which there is a mineral salt deficiency which comprises adding to said drugs an effective amount of the metal α -lipoates, metal α -dihydrolipoates or metal- α -lipoic acid complexes defined in claim 5.

15. (amended) A method of improving compositions for treating diabetes, tumors, HIV

B⁷
infections, AIDS, renal insufficiency, malnutrition, protein-energy malnutrition and mineral deficiencies which comprises adding to said compositions an effective amount of the metal α -lipoates, metal α -dihydrolipoates or metal- α -lipoic acid complexes defined in claim 5.
